

§ 4211.2

required to prescribe rules governing the application of the statutory allocation methods or modified methods by plans following merger of multiemployer plans. Subpart D sets forth alternative allocative methods to be used by merged plans. In addition, such plans may adopt any of the allocation methods or modifications described under subparts B and C in accordance with the rules under subparts B and C.

(b) *Scope*. This part applies to all multiemployer plans covered by title IV of ERISA.

§ 4211.2 Definitions.

The following terms are defined in § 4001.2 of this chapter: Code, employer, IRS, multiemployer plan, nonforfeitable benefit, PBGC, plan, and plan year.

In addition, for purposes of this part:

Initial plan year means a merged plan's first complete plan year that begins after the establishment of the merged plan.

Initial plan year unfunded vested benefits means the unfunded vested benefits as of the close of the initial plan year, less the value as of the end of the initial plan year of all outstanding claims for withdrawal liability that can reasonably be expected to be collected from employers that had withdrawn as of the end of the initial plan year.

Merged plan means a plan that is the result of the merger of two or more multiemployer plans.

Merger means the combining of two or more multiemployer plans into one multiemployer plan.

Prior plan means the plan in which an employer participated immediately before that plan became a part of the merged plan.

Unfunded vested benefits means an amount by which the value of nonforfeitable benefits under the plan exceeds the value of the assets of the plan.

Withdrawing employer means the employer for whom withdrawal liability is being calculated under section 4201 of ERISA.

Withdrawn employer means an employer who, prior to the withdrawing employer, has discontinued contributions to the plan or covered operations under the plan and whose obligation to

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contribute has not been assumed by a successor employer within the meaning of section 4204 of ERISA. A temporary suspension of contributions, including a suspension described in section 4218(2) of ERISA, is not considered a discontinuance of contributions.

§ 4211.3 Special rules for construction industry and IRC section 404(c) plans.

(a) *Construction plans*. Except as provided in §§ 4211.11(b) and 4211.21(b), a plan that primarily covers employees in the building and construction industry shall use the presumptive method for allocating unfunded vested benefits.

(b) *Section 404(c) plans*. A plan described in section 404(c) of the Code or a continuation of such a plan shall allocate unfunded vested benefits under the rolling-5 method unless the plan, by amendment, adopts an alternative method or modification.

Subpart B—Changes Not Subject to PBGC Approval

§ 4211.11 Changes not subject to PBGC approval.

(a) *General rule*. A plan, other than a plan that primarily covers employees in the building and construction industry, may adopt, by amendment, any of the statutory allocation methods and any of the modifications set forth in §§ 4211.12 and 4211.13, without the approval of the PBGC.

(b) *Building and construction industry plans*. A plan that primarily covers employees in the building and construction industry may adopt, by amendment, any of the modifications to the presumptive rule set forth in § 4211.12 without the approval of the PBGC.

§ 4211.12 Modifications to the presumptive, modified presumptive and rolling-5 methods.

(a) “Contributions made” and “total amount contributed”. Each of the allocation fractions used in the presumptive, modified presumptive and rolling-5 methods is based on contributions that certain employers have made to the plan for a five-year period. For purposes of these methods, and except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, “the sum of all contributions

made” or “total amount contributed” by employers for a plan year means the amounts (other than withdrawal liability payments) considered contributed to the plan for the plan year for purposes of section 412(b)(3)(A) of the Code. For plan years before section 412 applies to the plan, “the sum of all contributions made” or “total amount contributed” means the amount reported to the IRS or the Department of Labor as total contributions for the plan year; for example, for plan years in which the plan filed the Form 5500, the amount reported as total contributions on that form. Employee contributions, if any, shall be excluded from the totals.

(b) *Changing the period for counting contributions.* A plan sponsor may amend a plan to modify the denominators in the presumptive, modified presumptive and rolling-5 methods in accordance with one of the alternatives described in this paragraph. Except as provided in paragraph (b)(4) of this section, any amendment adopted under this paragraph shall be applied consistently to all plan years. Contributions counted for one plan year may be not counted for any other plan year. If a contribution is counted as part of the “total amount contributed” for any plan year used to determine a denominator, that contribution may not also be counted as a contribution owed with respect to an earlier year used to determine the same denominator, regardless of when the plan collected that contribution.

(1) A plan sponsor may amend a plan to provide that “the sum of all contributions made” or “total amount contributed” for a plan year means the amount of contributions that the plan actually received during the plan year, without regard to whether the contributions are treated as made for that plan year under section 412(b)(3)(A) of the Code.

(2) A plan sponsor may amend a plan to provide that “the sum of all contributions made” or “total amount contributed” for a plan year means the amount of contributions actually received during the plan year, increased by the amount of contributions received during a specified period of time after the close of the plan year not to

exceed the period described in section 412(c)(10) of the Code and regulations thereunder.

(3) A plan sponsor may amend a plan to provide that “the sum of all contributions made” or “total amount contributed” for a plan year means the amount of contributions actually received during the plan year, increased by the amount of contributions accrued during the plan year and received during a specified period of time after the close of the plan year not to exceed the period described in section 412(c)(10) of the Code and regulations thereunder.

(4) A plan sponsor may amend a plan to provide that—

(i) For plan years ending before September 26, 1980, “the sum of all contributions made” or “total amount contributed” means the amount of total contributions reported on Form 5500 and, for years before the plan was required to file Form 5500, the amount of total contributions reported on any predecessor reporting form required by the Department of Labor or the IRS; and

(ii) For subsequent plan years, “the sum of all contributions made” or “total amount contributed” means the amount described in paragraph (a) of this section, or the amount described in paragraph (b)(1), (b)(2) or (b)(3) of this section.

(c) *Excluding contributions of significant withdrawn employers.* Contributions of certain withdrawn employers are excluded from the denominator in each of the fractions used to determine a withdrawing employer’s share of unfunded vested benefits under the presumptive, modified presumptive and rolling-5 methods. Except as provided in paragraph (c)(1) of this section, contributions of all employers that permanently cease to have an obligation to contribute to the plan or permanently cease covered operations before the end of the period of plan years used to determine the fractions for allocating unfunded vested benefits under each of those methods (and contributions of all employers that withdrew before September 26, 1980) are excluded from the denominators of the fractions.

(1) The plan sponsor of a plan using the presumptive, modified presumptive

or rolling-5 method may amend the plan to provide that only the contributions of significant withdrawn employers shall be excluded from the denominators of the fractions used in those methods.

(2) For purposes of this paragraph (c), “significant withdrawn employer” means—

(i) An employer to which the plan has sent a notice of withdrawal liability under section 4219 of ERISA; or

(ii) A withdrawn employer that in any plan year used to determine the denominator of a fraction contributed at least \$250,000 or, if less, 1% of all contributions made by employers for that year.

(3) If a group of employers withdraw in a concerted withdrawal, the plan shall treat the group as a single employer in determining whether the members are significant withdrawn employers under paragraph (c)(2) of this section. A “concerted withdrawal” means a cessation of contributions to the plan during a single plan year—

(i) By an employer association;

(ii) By all or substantially all of the employers covered by a single collective bargaining agreement; or

(iii) By all or substantially all of the employers covered by agreements with a single labor organization.

§ 4211.13 Modifications to the direct attribution method.

(a) *Error in direct attribution method.* The unfunded vested benefits allocated to a withdrawing employer under the direct attribution method are the sum of the employer’s attributable liability, determined under section 4211(c)(4)(A)(i) and (B) of ERISA, and the employer’s share of the plan’s unattributable liability, determined under section 4211(c)(4)(E) and allocated to the employer under section 4211(c)(4)(F). Plan sponsors should allocate unattributable liabilities on the basis of the employer’s share of the attributable liabilities. However, section 4211(c)(4)(F) of ERISA, which describes the allocation of unattributable liabilities, contains a typographical error. Therefore, plans adopting the direct attribution method shall modify the phrase “as the amount determined under subparagraph (C) for the em-

ployer bears to the sum of the amounts determined under subparagraph (C) for all employers under the plan” in section 4211(c)(4)(F) by substituting “subparagraph (B)” for “subparagraph (C)” in both places it appears.

(b) *Allocating unattributable liability based on contributions in period before withdrawal.* A plan that is amended to adopt the direct attribution method may provide that instead of allocating the unattributable liability in accordance with section 4211(c)(4)(F) of ERISA, the employer’s share of the plan’s unattributable liability shall be determined by multiplying the plan’s unattributable liability determined under section 4211(c)(4)(E) by a fraction—

(1) The numerator of which is the total amount of contributions required to be made by the withdrawing employer over a period of consecutive plan years (not fewer than five) ending before the withdrawal; and

(2) The denominator of which is the total amount contributed under the plan by all employers for the same period of years used in paragraph (b)(1) of this section, decreased by any amount contributed by an employer that withdrew from the plan during those plan years.

Subpart C—Changes Subject to PBGC Approval

§ 4211.21 Changes subject to PBGC approval.

(a) *General rule.* Subject to the approval of the PBGC pursuant to this subpart, a plan, other than a plan that primarily covers employees in the building and construction industry, may adopt, by amendment, any allocation method or modification to an allocation method that is not permitted under subpart B of this part.

(b) *Building and construction industry plans.* Subject to the approval of the PBGC pursuant to this subpart, a plan that primarily covers employees in the building and construction industry may adopt, by amendment, any allocation method or modification to an allocation method that is not permitted